

But I agree with the premise of the gentleman that both sides of the aisle have tried to hold the other responsible for the debt. On our side, frankly, we disagreed with the fiscal policies that were being pursued, which, as you know, we think took us from a \$5.6 trillion surplus to now a \$3 trillion deficit in the last 6 years. We tried to make that point through that vote. But the gentleman's basic premise I think is absolutely correct. There really isn't an option of when we get to the debt limit, we either ought to stop spending money, reduce very substantially our entitlement obligations, or we have no alternative but to raise the debt.

Mr. BLUNT. Reclaiming my time, I would say that it is a challenge, the budget is a challenge. We look forward to the solutions that the chairman brings forward and having that debate on the budget, having that debate on the size of the debt. We hope we can get to a budget that is balanced in 5 years without a tax increase. I am sure that will be one of the many topics that we will be discussing over the next few weeks as the budget progresses.

As I said earlier, the earliest possible access to at least a draft of the supplemental will be helpful to us. And we hope that the majority will work with us to get that supplemental draft to us as soon as possible so that we can begin that important debate that will be on the floor I don't think next week, because clearly, the time would not allow that, but hopefully as soon as the week after that, and we look forward to that debate.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2007, AND HOUR OF MEETING ON FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate; and further, when the House adjourns on Thursday, March 8, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. on Friday, March 9.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALZ). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 2007, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II BIN AL HUSSEIN, KING OF JORDAN

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Wednesday, March 7, 2007, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is getting to the point where I am almost afraid to pick up the newspaper every morning because day after day, there is more grim news out of Iraq and the Middle East. More revelations about the scandalous mismanagement of this war and its aftermath. More evidence that the current administration is jeopardizing our national security.

There has been a lot of rhetoric here on Capitol Hill about who supposedly does and does not support the troops. I personally believe we should call a moratorium on "support the troops" demagoguery until the conditions at Walter Reed Hospital finally reach the level that our veterans deserve.

It is positively disgraceful, Mr. Speaker. After risking life and limb for our country, our soldiers are sent to a moldy, rodent-infested facility where they receive inadequate care. And today, we read that Walter Reed officials were aware of problems and heard complaints, but largely ignored them.

The squalid living conditions of Walter Reed are just one symptom of a completely ineffective and unaccountable bureaucracy. According to the Washington Post, nonEnglish speaking families have a difficult time getting the information and services they need.

One mother of a soldier said, "If they could have Spanish-speaking recruits to convince my son to go into the Army, why can't they have Spanish-speaking translators when he is injured?" Her point is telling. It appears that our government is very eager to sign you up, but much less enthusiastic about communicating with you once you have been shot down.

Meanwhile, conditions in the Middle East are rapidly deteriorating. The most disturbing recent news is that the Taliban and al Qaeda, remember, they are the ones who bear direct responsibility for 9/11, these folks are on the rebound and they are stepping up the violence in Afghanistan. They are so emboldened that they launched a suicide bomb attack right outside the Air Force base where the Vice President was staying during his recent trip to the region.

Curiously, that same Vice President seems to think it is those of us who want to end the Iraq occupation that are validating the al Qaeda strategy. That was the line he used in attacking our Speaker last week. Well, I think the Vice President isn't in a position to throw stones, Mr. Speaker. First of all, al Qaeda didn't have anything to do in Iraq until the administration launched its pre-emptive strike nearly 4 years ago. Furthermore, it was this administration that had bin Laden sounded at Tora Bora and let him get away. And it is this administration that has taken its eye off the ball in Afghanistan, diverting resources from a nation-building project to pursue the ideological fantasy of conquering Iraq.

□ 1615

The new director of national intelligence, Mike McConnell, told the Senate Armed Services Committee this week: "Long-term prospects for eliminating the Taliban threat appear dim, so long as the sanctuary remains in Pakistan, and there are no encouraging signs that Pakistan is eliminating it."

And whose fault is that, Mr. Speaker? Not the Speaker of the House.

Unbelievably, when the White House spokesman was asked about the Pakistani Government's failure to cooperate, he answered: "We're often asked to give our report cards on other heads of state. I'm not going to play."

We have sure come a long way from the tough talk of 2001. Remember how we were told that those who harbored terrorists would be treated just as harshly as the terrorists themselves?

Journalist Spencer Ackerman assesses the Afghanistan situation this way: "After two wars, we're in some sense right back where we were before 9/11 itself: unable to invade the territory where al Qaeda possesses a stronghold and groping for alternatives, while the intelligence community puts out warnings about the urgency of the threat. Except this time," he continues, "our entire national security apparatus is overtaxed from the strains of two wars, wars that were supposed